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ABSTRACT

Imagery and metaphors for language teaching, language teachers, and language students that appear in the literature of language teacher training do not reflect a sense of mutual teacher-student cooperation or complementarity, but may instead show why most second language students seldom achieve more than minimal language proficiency. Terminology currently in use includes references to students as raw materials and teachers as cooks, teaching as a cultivating or nurturing activity, the teacher as alchemist, the teacher as marksman with language or group as a "target," the teacher as fisherman "casting a net" or "streaming" students, teaching as production, the teacher as caretaker, the teacher as clinician and the student as client, and teaching as performing arts. In most cases, the teacher is seen as active and the student as passive. If these metaphors and images represent the language teaching profession's collective values and typical attitudes, examination of them may also help to understand the conditioned teacher-student relationship, to see the factors that shape productive or unproductive attitudes, and to contribute to greater teacher freedom and creativity in choosing appropriate self-images for the classroom. As long as the profession continues to think and feel in terms of the current metalanguage of language teaching, it will not be able to promote the kind of language-using activities in which there is as much student involvement and as little teacher direction as possible. (MSE)

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PEDAGOGICAL SELF IMAGE IS THE KEY TO BETTER STUDENT-TEACHER INTERACTION

by Michael Danahy

Nov. 1984

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Because we all wear many different hats in life, several different clusters of metaphors tend to recur in writing about L2 student teacher interactions. What I propose is an assessment of this meta language of language teaching, an analysis, that is, of specific patterns of imagery in the teacher preparation literature and their signification.

In editing Language Study for the 80's, Richard Brod worried about the plight of an ever increasing number of "teachers of foreign languages whose training has been in literature but whose chief responsibility is the language courses."(22) Without being specific, he expressed his grave personal concern about the inappropriate images and models that we may follow when teaching languages. Charles Hancock has also made us aware of our general plight. For based on his search of some of the profession's most carefully conceived recent books, he has concluded that models of humanistic education are not being implemented in any systematic manner in teacher education programs (187-190). The field of L2 education has remained remarkably and regrettably steadfast in its emphasis on the language to the detriment of creating humanistic self images.

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The imagery which I found in the literature of language teaching seemed to fall readily into two broad categories: those implying a relationship between things human and non human and those implying dyadic relationships between human beings. The first category typically included cooking, gardening, and related activities of a low socio economic status

not usually associated with the liberal professions. The teacher was envisaged, for instance, as a chef selecting recipes and blending ingredients in order to serve a mouth-watering, taste-tempting delight (Chastain 6 See also Second Language Classroom 88 and Rivers 483-486). By extension, students were viewed as raw materials, like salt, flour, or raw eggs in a culinary process. These ingredients remain inherently inert and presumably unappetizing until transformed by the skills of a master chef into some new organic whole. In a slight variant of this faded metaphor, the aim of the good L2 teacher is to whet the appetite or at least not kill the hunger, desire, gusto, relish, taste or thirst for the foreign tongue which the students may feel.

From time to time, we benefit, as teachers, from recalling the limits where all our metaphors break down. In this case, we may need to be reminded that appetite is not a function of the chef's culinary talents or gifts, nor is it killed by the half-baked cooking to which it may be exposed. Our own experience is reassuring here. For the memory of the many badly done burgers that we have all consumed without losing our taste for the big meal puts in doubt the value of such imagery. By the same token, not even the most exquisitely prepared catch of the day will change the appetite of the average seafood hating adults among us. The chef, after all, is never completely in charge of this experience and the truth of the matter is that any so called appetite always remains to some extent endogenous, instinctual, and unique to the individual.

Thus, common sense prevents us from attributing strong meaning to such a manner of speaking. Still the perennial use of culinary terms does an undeniable disservice to both parties involved in L2 acquisition. For it sets up a binary opposition of active/passive as the basis of the transaction, and thereby increases the risks of holding the pedagogue overly responsible for what the student "eats" or "swallows." For culinary success or failure is

normally said to fall on the cook, rather than on the dinner guests or on the ingredients themselves--which is an even sillier prospect. By the same token, the metaphor undervalues the agency of the learner in an inversely proportionate degree. Thus, carried along uncritically by the logic of the dichotomy, we may easily mislead ourselves into a diminished belief in and respect for the learner's autonomy. That is, we may be seriously underestimating, in the choice of our pedagogicial practices, the power that students have to determine what they like and dislike eating. Certain of these choices may then become futile.

Similar difficulties arise with the metaphors of gardening. At this end of the food chain, the instructor's activities are likened to cultivating the earth, planting and nurturing seeds, growing or pruning flowers, weeding out errors, and the like (Stevick Teaching and Learning 49). And as L2 instruction proceeds, the teacher must be willing to step aside and let the ideas of the students blossom in the foreign language (Rivers 244). This imagery at least removes the opposition of animate/inanimate from the symmetry of the student-teacher interaction, although it still reinforces the basic dichotomy of active/passive, as in the previous set of images.

Leaving aside the production, preparation, or consumption of food, we encounter much scientific imagery. As self-images, these are clearly less domestic or less service oriented, but just as clearly retain the by-now familiar but hidden set of binary oppositions, within which students are invariably redefined in terms of passivity, inferiority, and subordination. L2 teacher cum scientist-at-work, formulating hypotheses to put to the test, is a good example. Within the framework of this popular image, (Chastain 157), the student is transformed; he or she must be imagined therefore as chemicals, guinea pigs, or the like. Images of flight engineers scientifically trained also belong to this set. Confronting "the one who must man the controls in the classroom," (Brooks 75)

are students, like so many dials on sophisticated pieces of equipment. Either they are turned on (so it is hoped) or off (as the saying goes). Is Rivers imparting an updated, space-age twist to the notion in urging us to be on the alert in conversation courses for opportunities to "launch" the shy or taciturn? (Rivers 242)

Whatever else the effect of such words, they relegate learners to the sub-human status of things to be experimented upon or with. The areas where all this work went on were inevitably called language laboratories by metaphorical extension. To call them otherwise, rooms, boxes, or centers, simply would not have done at the time of their introduction. For only in the lab could a language scientist provide the best stimuli for the best responses. Control all the variables in a predictable, germ-free environment to eliminate error altogether from the results of the experiments. And the value of the work seemed to rest precisely on its repeatability.

In the area of sporting metaphors, I noted primarily a cluster associated with the marksman or sharpshooter. At one end of this polarization stands a teacher aiming to hit a bull's eye; on the other end is a "target" language or "target" group. One writer advises us to choose material with an eye to the student's mind or acquisition device: missing this mark by overshooting only leads to boredom, or by undershooting to frustration (Krashen 132). One function that a teacher may be assigned in these terms vis a vis the students is to act as "troubleshooter." (Stevick Teaching and Learning 133). These metaphors offer no proof of the pudding in the eating but undoubtedly foster instead the pedagogical satisfaction of being "big gun," which is the challenge of scoring a direct hit and winning the game.

When it comes to water sports, the teacher may be viewed as a fisherman, for instance, who goes about casting a net for the students (Krashen 127-131).

Within the metaphorical context of aquatic environments, it is legitimate to wonder about the underlying intent when we speak of "streaming" students. Is it, in effect, to stock classrooms in such a manner that catching fish is made easy on the teacher,more sporting fun (Rivers, 386).

The L2 teacher may also be imagined as an artisan or craftsman. Within this image cluster, a specific set of skills is usually superimposed upon the basic image to help concretize the student-teacher relationship. The teacher's function may be to build a fire or to fix a model airplane so that it can fly. (Stevick, Teaching and Learning 145). Or it may be, with the potter's image, to mold lifeless lumps of clay into something shapely, beautiful, and human. In the Book of Genesis, this activity, with its suggestions of great creative and technical powers, was ascribed to the divinity. But modern-day claims that only a teacher can create a learner-centered classroom and the related binary opposition of student-centered versus teacher-centered classroom activities are culturally consistent with the original biblical imagery, if not ultimately derived from it. The imagery implies that the potter-teacher has the skill, the sensitivity, and the training to get the clay centered on the wheel, in order to bring it up and work with it. What may strike some readers as curious is that the image leaves learners with so little to do in the process. Their minimal role contrasts sharply with that of the teacher acting as a kind of supreme being alone endowed with the desire and the ability to do the centering. For this reason alone, the metaphor has perhaps outlived its usefulness and beauty.

Finally, among the metaphors of the teacher as faber, it is no surprise in our modern industrial economy to discover those which draw instead on the language of mechanical production to clarify, justify, or rectify what it is we do. The teacher's job, in one case, is conceived as winding together the separate strands of the learning process so that they form a strong cable. The fingers

of the successful teacher must find out how to bend and direct the learning and acquistion of another language. (Stevick, Teaching and Learning 27.) Carried to their logical conclusions, these metaphors found the possiblility and rationality of trying to measure teacher effectiveness and efficiency "objectively," that is, quantitatively, in terms of student performances, outputs, and achievements. In this view, the teacher's job is to produce a new verbal behavior. It follows that the way to measure the teacher is to measure the learner. And some undoubtedly view this as a legitimate basis of accountability and evaluation for merit incentives. Test the student to judge the teacher. The teacher is assessed as the "cause" that does or does not produce certain predictable, stable, and repeatable effects on pupils (Politzer 253) who in turn are assessed as the results of the good or bad work done unto them. At other times, the L2 teacher is conceived rather as the manager in the factory production model, and it is the students who are seen either as the objects produced or as the worker producing the measurable L2 results.[1] In both cases, the metaphor is philosophisically derived from the mechanistic model of assembly line mass production. And the objection put by Carol Herron in her study of "Foreign Language Learning Approaches as Metaphors" seems valid: "...but once...the students become well-oiled stimulus response robots then we have succumbed to the danger of our own metaphorical trap " (238). This is unfortunately the case here and whenever we sacrifice the individual needs of the person to those of group unit production.

The images discussed so far have one factor in common. They permit, indeed encourage us to treat L2 learners as raw materials, deprived in one vital sense or another of the three basic human qualities of locomotion, volition, and judgement. By definition, metaphors of the second category do not quite go this far. They fall into four primary groups: the military, the family, the practice of medicine, and the performing arts. We will consider them in turn before asking the questions to which the category as a whole gives rise.

As an expression "goal language" would have served our avowed professional purposes as well as the phrase "target language," which is the one that did gain currency. Indeed, the entire range of military vocabulary, of tactics, strategies and doing battle is widespread. And teachers are frequently urged to bridge the gap between camps of opposing theories or methodologies. All the teacher preparation handbooks point out that the development of ALM and many of the most sophisticated teaching and testing devices was to meet the needs of the American Army. Nor do we wince when speaking of drills, drilling, and more drill work. The success of the "army method" is given in one source as the principal cause for the great surge of national interest in foreign language education (Guidelines 326.) Yet how easily we could do without the military phraseology and refer instead to pattern practice or exercises or workouts or routines (See Savignon 20-29). For the truth is that many L2 learners instinctively want nothing to do with army sergeants (nor for that matter with dentists, oilmen, or any others in the tense business of drilling.)[2] As with any set of associations, this cluster makes sense only in terms of what we have become used to.[3]

Our professional self-images also continue to show an "irresistable fascination" (Rivers 52) with the parent-child relationship. Time and time again, we are urged to take students by the hand, to lead them along the path, to guide their every step of the way, or to treat them in all the other ways which prove reminiscent of how we handle helpless infants who can do nothing for themselves but babble. These images are not unrelated to previous ones about food. For one function imputed to the language instructor is determining the student's diet in L2 skills acquisition after weaning. Because they are considered "not yet strong enough to eat of any meat" (Rivers 282), they may be nurtured on artificial food, and sometimes judicious cutting makes the chewy stuff more palatable and digestible. This sort of teacher becomes a caretaker, which in

most cases means a mother. Indeed, reminders that "caretaker speech" is an excellent teaching language abound. (Krashen 102 and 132) Whence the professional research interest in "motherese." Similarly, in one author, the justification for accepting errors from students is that parents do so from their young children (Savignon 81).

But the issue I raise is not error correction, nor is it whether the L1 and L2 acquistion processes are demonstrably similar to any significant degree. This remains to this day an open question in the research literature. Rather, our concern is with the impact of such metaphors on classroom behaviors, including affect and attitude. This image cluster is obviously meant to promote the positive environment associated with good parenting. We would, however, be far less easily swayed in practice by child models of L2 acquisition, if in fact we relied less on these metaphors to take the place of, while concealing the gaps in our theoretical knowledge. Were we freer of them in our minds, we would, in effect, adopt a point of view that is not quite as unilateral. We would not fail to take into account the one crucial and unmistakeable difference between individuals in the L1 and L2 acquisition processes: THE AGE DIFFERENCE. The impact of a teacher imagining him or herself as parent must inevitably differ in the two situations. For viewed metaphorically and especially from the uncustomary end of the parent-child polarity, the solicitude for the learner which the pedagogue as parent sees, may be perceived at the other end by the learner, only as condescension or infantilization. Thus, the impact of a teacher as parent may be quite negative in spite of the intended praiseworthy tenor, vehicle and grounds. And since no one likes to be reminded that he or she is being treated like a baby, the issue in the long run is whether this imagery is beneficial or detrimental to our bearing in the classroom and our interactions with students.

The inadequacy of the self-image proposed becoems clearer when it is generalized and the state itself is construed as the family in question. In these instances, the teacher of modern foreign languages and literature is assigned a civilizing mission akin to socialization by parents, that of forming good citizens. Because the role assumed is said to be of prime importance in the national interest, teachers have even been presented as a statue, someone fit to be an inspiring model of citizenship for the young (Guidelines 346). This relationship involves a socio-political application of the parent-child image[4]. Although the analogy seems to be posited less often these days, it is nonetheless still used to justify and dignify the profession, give it a rationale in the taxpayer's mind, and secure prestige and financial support for it.

Doctor-client imagery is a third cluster: it often dominates the presentation of conversation practice in L2 teacher preparation and methods texts. The teacher is viewed as a clinician whose dual function is to diagnose whatever is wrong and prescribe a healthy dose of the medicine that seems right (See Szymarsky 73).

In a related field of health care, the doctor counselor treats psychological or mental needs and problems instead of bodily ones. The L2 teacher is encouraged to play the counselor and become more professional as a "process helper," while the learner is matched up as "the person to be changed." (Godda 337). Thus the class could function as a group in need of a well prepared facilitator of discussion and interaction. Indeed, many of the techniques listed in manuals do share a common aim: to enable us to "inject" our (moribund?) classes (cadavres?) with "new interest." (Rivers 241)

In this context, one reason cited for computer assisted instruction is that it frees an instructor to serve the needy at the moment they most need remedial attention. This frequent justification surely reflects a medical concern for curing the infirm. To state that students will "need"

help is to say something quite different from stating that students will "want" or benefit from help. On the other hand, when one decides instead to help those who most want help, whether it is those who most "need" it or not, then a self-image very different from the medical one comes into play.

Nelson Brooks stresses qualities like zeal, exuberance, fondness for people, and altruism when he compares the L2 profession to the models of prestige in the liberal professions, namely doctors, lawyers, and clergy (72-73). Thus, the cluster of hippocratic imagery seems to hold out the promise of adult possibilities in the student-teacher relationship, even though the vocabulary may vary according to the kind of therapeutic process imagined. Once again, however, the binary oppositions built into the medical metaphors seem to carry unacceptable and inappropriate dichotomies. First, curing is different from teaching whether the medical implication is to make pathological determinism the way to learning improvements or, in the opposing view, growth in consciousness the way to attain a healthier state of understanding. Moreover, such imagery posits the teacher as the healthy person in the dyad, casting the student in the role of sick or helpless client. Whether pathologist or therapist, therefore, the teacher is made external to the situation, set apart from the learner, over and above a passive person on whom he or she is expected to operate or set to work. Predictably this attitude will not pay off and then, <u>in extremis mortis</u>, to borrow Albert Valdman's phrase, major surgery may be due (261).

Far less objectionable in this regard are the images from the performing arts. By definition, methods textbooks assume that learners will first practice skills so they may use them later in "real" situations outside the classroom. Because this becomes the place for rehearsing the parts that one might end up playing elsewhere, students become actors and teachers directors in communication role playing. Either the class is imagined as on stage or as the stage itself.

And in a variant within this cluster, Stevick (Teaching and Learning 52) introduces the imagery of rhythm (See also Rivers 484). The metaphor assigns to the instructor sole responsibility for orchestrating everything that goes on in the class, calling the tune, conducting learners who are under the baton of a maestro. Here again, they must be imagined as dependent upon and submissive to him if the music, their words, are to make a harmonious sense. Stevick extends the metaphor in great detail, carrying it out to the point of suggesting that the teacher-conductor eliminate verbal interactions when rehearsing the music and use instead facial expressions to get across necessary approval and feedback to the players. Although a concert is normally presented on stage before an audience, indeed it seems pointless without one, there is one exception and it is an important one in terms of learning objectives. Music can be made for self-expression, esthetic pleasure, self-fulfillment, and personal enjoyment. This is the sort of motivation that is privileged by the metaphor.[5]

Each of the metaphor clusters that we have considered contains its own peculiar logic. Taken collectively, however, they exhibit something short-sighted, self-contradictory, and finally self-defeating in much of our best pedagogical literature.[6] These pitfalls are apparent, however, only when we come to the realization that our patterns of thought and feelings, our metaphors, do indeed give rise to a pattern of behavior in the process of teaching and learning the language.

First we may note the inner inconsistency of these metaphors. Several of the authors considered wrote only of the teacher as taking any part at all in the process. Likewise, many of the other metaphors noted down-play or deny the student role. Logically, on the other hand, their use makes no sense at all unless the student's role is dynamic, interactive and direct. For instance, it may well be the case that L2 students, as one image above put it, depend on

instructors to wind the separate strands of learning and acquisition together into a strong cable. Yet it is every bit as true that we depend on them to submit to our winding and bending. In other words, it is really because students are integral parts of the process, playing ~~equivalent~~ symmetrically equivalent and reciprocal roles, that due consideration must be given for their part in the processes. Imagery that makes them seem passive, and bereft of locomotion, volition, and judgement , is unsatisfactory. Or to take another metaphor, also cited earlier, a student must be willing to trust and accept the teacher as a skilled craftsperson or artisar in a way that no lump of clay is ever called upon to accept the potter who shapes and centers.

The relationships posited are therefore essentially dyadic, ~~but~~ for ~~the~~ both parties are being east and trained equally in certain roles. But the metaphors undermine the complementarities, because they make it clear that the subordinate or inferior status is invariably meted out to the learner. Thus, despite the warning issued by Grittner many years ago against domineering and one-sided approaches (16), there still prevails a metaphorical aggrandisement of the teacher to the detriment of the learner as the one whose functioning posits the nature of L2 learning.

Our metaphors therefore seem inconsistent as well with the true purposes of education and the desired goals of L2 study. Can genuine acquisition occur in this lopsided fashion, when one party is unilaterally imagined to be the passive and submissive one? It is doubtful. Even so, will the learner benefit from always being on the dependent, supporting side in an unequal distribution of parts. It would seem that to be guided by our pedagogical metaphors risks bringing out the worst qualities in both parties involved. For on the basis of them, we might have to conclude that the qualities needed to become a functional L2 user are at odds with the qualities we want most to value in an effective L2 speaker: initiative, spontaneity, autonomy, and charm.

From a broader philosophical perspective, the meta-language of language teaching carries embedded within it mechanistic notions of stimulus-response operant conditioning. It projects these models of causal determinism into and upon student-teacher interactions, as well as upon other binary oppositions, whether these be viewed in human-non-human terms or human-sub-human patterns. Clearly, however, the L2 teacher fits the image neither of carpenter nor doctor. Which is to say that L2 teaching techniques cannot be calculated to produce results either the way a hammer does when used to pound nails or the way a fool-proof medicine does when administered to a patient. It follows that none of the techniques set forth in pedagogy manuals is invariably, inherently, and predictably effective in getting students to learn. This is the basic philosophical fallacy that Frank Grittner (151) was warning against when he asked us to remember

> that if anything has been learned by decades of research in the field of learning psychology, it is that the mind is much more than a tabula rasa upon which knowledge is systematically imprinted by the teacher. It is quite generally agreed that optimum learning is seldom possible without positive emotional involvement on the part of the students. And the student attitude is not likely to remain positive, if they are never allowed to express their individuality.

Logic aside, what is psychologically detrimental about the metaphors which I have examined is best seen in two related attitudes which they seem frequently to instill at once: overly high expectations coupled with unnecessarily low morale. For they convey an undue sense of power about the instructor's part in the L2 process. This has led Jakobovits to characterize the BALT syndrome (The Battered Language Teacher) as "self-elevation to instructional omnipotence" (and omniscience I might add) in front of the students (See Wing 287 and note 69).

When power is unevenly distributed on the side of the teachers, they inevitably expect of both students and themselves much too much in terms of progress, discipline, technical mastery, or a flawless execution. Indeed, the demoralization that results from not achieving these unrealistic expectations may be inversely proportional to the self elevation on which they were founded. This is why it is legitimate to speak of self depre sion in this case. There is a predictable progression from the self elevation to the demoralization based on the self deception of the metaphors.

As an example of such unrealistic expectations and their potential psychological impact, consider the classroom activity, "A Day to Remember," taken from one of the most useful L2 manuals available (Moscowitz 193). In explaining how the humanistically oriented affective exercise works, the author proposes the topic, "What is one day that was so special that you'd like to share it?" As instructors, we are asked to believe that L2 students could spontaneously reply with the foreign langauge equivalent of: "I'd like to relive the day I made the winning point in the championship football game in our school." Such an utterance surely reflects normal usage for a native. But the linguistic sophistication it assumes is phenomenal; it is complex as well as emotionally personal. It is not at all situated in the here and now. And consequently it is not at all within the grasp of most L2 students, even those who consciously control the L2 grammar and manifest positive attitudes to the instructor. Unforunately, such over-expectations are the case with all too many of the exercises generated in the spirit of the pedagogical metaphors that characterize the L2 acquistion literature.

To see students struggle and flounder against unrealistic expectations, missing the cues that we give them is, on the other hand, but one of the choices we have. The other is to avoid the puritanical idealism that Sandra Savignon has poignantly

characterized (230). Many instructors feel guilty, she claims, unless they insist on impeccable performance and on programming every minute of class talk time. To avoid this burden of guilt, they become overly demanding. And when their unrealistic standards go unmet, the burden of guilt for not insisting seriously enough is intensified. By becoming aware of the metaphors that make up the meta-language of language teaching, we may be able to avoid this vicious circle.

From this survey of the principal images and self images in the L2 pedagogy literature emerges the absence of a sense of mutual cooperation or complementarity between equally involved partners who will succeed in intercultural communication because of their bilateral effort. I have tried to show why and how a sense of reciprocity and symmetry are lacking. If such a conception seems unimaginable, this may also be due to the geo-political realities of the world today and the kinds of metaphors which these realities are likely to engender. Still there is reason to regret that peer relationships are excluded by and from the metaphors of the L2 acquisition process, as are dyadic images of partnership, collegiality, and collaboration--which is itself a highly charged ambiguous image for L2 instructors whose memory goes back to World War II.

One final metaphor stands out as worthy of comment, that of the student as tourist if only because of the consistent disclaimers in the literature (See Guidelines 350). It was rejected widely and repeatedly on the grounds that it promoted values inappropriate for pedagogical situations and connoted qualities like superficiality, boorishness, vulgarity, crudeness, cultural insensitivity and the like in the student. Moreover when the student is imaged as tourist, then the instructor becomes travel agent--a correlative image likewise deemed professionally detrimental and demeaning. Yet the deliberate and vehement denial of this metaphor may amount to the disquised expression of a psychic mechanism meant to protect us precisely against that which we fear collectively, unconsciously to be most true, the reality

which we wish the most not to admit to consciousness or conscience. For the fact is that the majority of L2 students seldom achieve more than minimal touristic proficiency. Nor will the majority of those fortunate enough to travel actually put L2 skills to use in any more than touristic situations. Does the denial of tourism metaphors enable us to cheat against these odds in our minds?

If the imagery and metaphors for language teaching which I have collected may be construed as adequate representations of some of our collective values and typical attitudes, then the results which I have reported here may help us to achieve the kind of critical understanding called for, may help us to see better the terms in which we have been conditioned to imagine the L2 student teacher relationship, help us to develop a keener sensitivity to the factors that shape productive or unproductive attitudes, and finally contribute to a greater creativity and freedom among us when it comes to choosing appropriate self images for what it is that we do in the L2 classroom.

A word of caution by Sandra Savignon underscores the purpose and value of this investigation and the point to which it has led us finally.

> Not until we have taken a critical look at teachers' attitudes, both individual and professional, will we be ready to determine what obstacles still lie in the way of creating the kinds of learning environments that will be the most helpful to our students. (114)
>
> Teachers themselves may be standing in the way of second language achievement... (296)

If this be the case, let us consider on occasion simply standing aside.

What that would mean concretely is that we can create occasions on which students work in small groups of their own. Thus, peer pressure can be put to work in positive ways. For instance, one on one conversations, in which ideas or information about a specified topic are exchanged briefly in a "moment of

truth," can be followed by whole group discussion and processing. Some textbooks, like the multi language series based on Non-Stop Discussion Workbook (Rowley, Mass; Newbury House) also provide both oral and writing practice in this mode. Because fewer opportunities arise for the metaphors to structure L2 student teacher interaction patterns, peer group activities deliver a double advantage. They minimize the negative impact of the images and self images that we have discussed, while motivating student participation. The time may also have come for T. J. Ackermans intriguing suggestion that the way to optimize L2 acquisition may lie in the direction of matching teachers and students according to teaching and learning styles (42).

One thing is certain. As long as we continue to think and feel in terms of the current meta language of language teaching, we will not be able to carry out Wilga Rivers'crucial recommendation to learn to promote the kind of language using activities in which there is as much student involvement and as little teacher direction as possible (230). The most authoritative research suggests in fact that the most effective means for teaching a foreign language lies simply in setting up an"acquisition rich"environment, thereby overloading the student with input from a wide range of authentic language samples both printed and spoken, and varying in levels of difficulty (krashen 10-38). Instead of tightly controlling the instructional sequence, perhaps we ought boldly to abandon the overly cautious strategies meant to ensure success by the way they limit adults to the taking of baby steps in their study of a foreign language. To get a sense of what Krashen has in mind, consider two game playing situations. First, in gambling, no one likes to win ~~win~~ with loaded dice. Or in chess and checkers, imagine a teenagers offended reaction to the parent or opponent who slyly lets him or her win each time they play. Satisfaction in the L2 classroom will only come from a more challenging relationship than this kind of game provides, than the forms of loaded dice which we may have been playing with,"Francais facile,"graded readers, mem-mim, and the like.

This investigation has shown that if all our books about language teaching teach us anything, the lesson has less to do withthe classroom behaviors which they espouse than with the self perceptions which they engender. For the person who picks one up has already embarked upon the inward process of constructing a latent self image. The images in this material provide the affective basis for the very self identity of the language teaching professional. Once in the classroom, moreover, the instructor begins, under the sway of these accrued images and self images, to convey cues to students on many different affective and behavioral levels. Thus we have seen that a two step process is actually set in motion. What teachers do is conditioned by how they imagine themselves and this in turn conditions how their students imagine them.

With the realization that language teaching above all else involves two way communication comes the awareness that not only learner needs but teacher needs too must be met (Brod 16, Savignon vii, and Grittner 163). Yet on the basis of the foregoing analysis, it is difficult to believe that this is happening. I have tried to show how this is so in many cases and some of the reasons why it is so. Taken collectively, these images and self images do not allow for that kind of positive emotional reinforcement that must occur at every step of the way for genuine language acquisition to occur. Nor is there much textual evidence, to go by the metaphorical mainsprings of what one reads, to support Rivers' claim that "teacher-student relations are changing from the traditional teacher-directed situation to one of teacher-student interaction with shared decision making." (See Wing286 and note 120)

Very few among us, on the other hand, reamin untouched by the healthy spirit of reappraisal that currently pervades the profession. With the decline, if not outright fall of the ALM empire - language labs, discrete point machine scored tests, and the like - great changes in L2 instructional goals, methods, and testing have come to the fore. The idea that one approach is effective for

all students or all teachers has either been proven illusory or simply fallen into discredit. During such a period of transition, the latent self images that we have analyzed take hold and prevail to a greater degree than would otherwise be the case (Wing309). For it is precisely the lack of a prevailing conviction about one recognized or certified right way - a way and ways of teaching languages - that creates the void which the images can fill, a need for them to meet. For the foreseeable future, therefore, such images may well exert more and more influence as self images on the L2 instructors who will turn in increasing numbers to any one of the leading how to do it manuals that we have surveyed.

In the final analysis, however, changes in classroom dynamics will occur, not through new rules or new roles, but through new perceptions, new ways of thinking, feeling, and writing about ourselves. For interaction patterns are more a matter of the imagination than of external behavior, of strategies and peripherals. How the need for change will be met still remains unclear. But in that undertaking, T. J. Ackerman again offers a useful reminder (36). Without favoring the polarization, he concluded that modern language professionals have been unduly preoccupied with "them" (by which he meant students) at the expense of "us," thereby neglecting the pedagogue's motivation, attitudes, or aptitude to the detriment of all concerned. Surely then the first step in meeting this need will be self knowledge.

> To teach in a different tongue, about other peoples, about cultural advances, and about the greatness of ancestors requires a special self image as a person, as a professional, and as a member of society. (Godda327)

Thus, the most basic of all socratic endeavors must precede any attempt to create a package of instant images or new self images. And it is precisely in terms of self knowledge, which is paradoxically the end as well as the first step in all education, that I would like to raise a final question.

Why have we perpetuated or would we go on perpetuating a series of images and self images which, I have shown, promotes unsatisfactory L2 student teacher

interactions? Or to put the matter as socratically as possible, is what we have learned about ourselves in learning about the meta language of language teaching, that we like being in control, that we suffer anxieties that prevent us from renouncing the security and superiority of being solely and completely responsible for classroom objectives and techniques? To confront that fear of being somehow pedagogically naked - hatless, as it were - stripped of the familiar images for what we do and our protective coating, this is a form of self knowledge. So too is an awareness of the limits of that self succinctly expressed in Sandra Savignon's words: "The teacher can teach, but only the learner can learn" (113. See also Wing287). In acknowledging his or her limits, the teacher is ready to encourage learners and provide occasions for learning, while leaving the learner free to make the most of them. In this sense, the function of the L2 instructor is not only limited but relatively modest.

We cannot, as Earl Stevick's image reminds us, supply the wings for soaring in fancy free flights of conversation (Teaching and Learning 121). Or as the myth reminds us, were we to become Daedalus, than Icarus would drown. In addition to the self knowledge, the self discipline that is required means that all teaching, like all genuine learning, had best renew its socratic origins.

NOTES

1. Here one may speak of the first level of activity as the forging of the instrument and the aim of the teacher is to present students with a functioning language system. The students then seem to be viewed shortsightedly as passively receiving this instrument. (Rivers 191).

2. Suggestive of a military tonality in much L2 pedagogy literature is this one sentence (Rivers 101): "We give drill cues to trigger the desired change in the sentence or force out an answer." The image of the trigger must be read in connection with the earlier imagery of hunting and shooting. All these phrases carry overtones of an unavowed authoritarian approach that strangely belies the consciously avowed intention that language practice must be (Rivers 195) creative and foster natural spontaneous communication. Or consider the good intentions behind this recommendation in which one detects an attitudinal cue of imperialism: when learning reaches a plateau, we must choose a "new method of attack," (142 and 146). In halcyon days, Chastain had us suiting up and sallying forth like true men--well armored but perhaps Quixotic (157). "Fortified with the armor of his understanding of theory...he sallies forth to do battle (intellectually) with his first class."

3. Palmer in 1921, justifying the eclecticism of the multiple line of approach to language teaching, recommends using each and every method, process, exercise, drill, device, or form that works. Specifically military metaphors, it seems, took over and drove out this mix and proportion, Palmer's judicious selection which included "drill", but without prejudice to non-military phraseology (Rivers 55).

4. L2 instructors thus have an analogous role to play in the keeping of the national household; this role has most recently been called "Education for domestication" by Helen Moglen (4).

5. This cluster of imagery harbors an ambiguity. For the very notion of "performing" in the student-teacher relationship can be construed in terms of behaviorist psychology or in terms of the esthetic values of the dramatic arts. This ambiguity can lead to further confusion in goals, in measuring desired outcomes, and in the selection and evaluation of teaching techniques. Where activities like role playing, skits, and choral chanting or recitation, are stressed, esthetic considerations may take precedence over behavioral modifications. However, even esthetic performance is not really, nor can it realistically be, what we are trying to achieve in teaching for communication competence. For the creative and spontaneous use of language, like all affect--that is to say, the affective and involved use of the language, must start on the inside, not the outside. It is unwise to imagine teaching and learning a language as akin to slipping on a costume. Thus, the acting metaphors can activate the deep suspicion in our culture against "acting", used pejoratively to mean putting on a show, or being manipulative and connoting hypocrisy.

6. I have stressed similarities within clusters of metaphors. There are many differences between the metaphors of one cluster which link them in meaning and suggestion with those in other clusters. Thus, there is much overlapping and reinforcing of the patterns of thought behind the seemingly disparate array of images. This convergence may be seen, as an example, in a short comparison like the following (Rivers 242). The well-prepared teacher is like a play director "ready to throw a few provocative unexpected questions into the ring." If we try to take this literally, we get a sense of the converging attitudinal factors embedded. For what it is that we imagine we are doing when we teach does provide a cue and a clue to what in fact we are doing. In this instance, tossing questions into the ring is an expression appropriate to the entertainment industry. Notions of a boxing ring or a circus ring come quickly to mind. There is also the political ring into which

people talk of tossing hats. An empty manner of speaking or a manner of giving our feelings an image, especially our negative ones, perhaps a soothing image for dealing with L2 students? There is obviously a point at which relying on the showmanship of politics, the circus, or gymnasium becomes degrading to both parties in L2 instruction. It is at this point that our metaphors break down.

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